

**Sermon Series**  
**The Superiority of Jesus Christ**  
**Resurrection Sunday**  
**April 17, 2022**

**Title: A Shocking First**

*Subject: Gospel Sermon, Pentecost, Peter, Foreknowledge of God, God's Purpose, Christ Crucified, Christ Risen, Righteousness of God, Eternal Life, Salvation, Atonement, Holy Spirit,*

**Theme Text: Acts 2:22-24 (ESV) <sup>22</sup> “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— <sup>23</sup> this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. <sup>24</sup> God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.**

**Theme Illustration:** Historians, the Media, and history itself tend to take a particular celebratory note of the firsts throughout human history. We are blessed to see the first man land on the moon, the first man to fly an airplane nonstop across the Atlantic Ocean, the first black baseball player in the major leagues, the first light bulb, phone call, the first to break the sound barrier, and the first Dick Tracy wrist communicator, and the first successful heart and lung transplants. There were all heralded. We are also aware of the more notorious firsts, the first atomic bomb, the first supreme court decision to allow legal abortions, the first so-called gay marriage, and the first designer baby. However notable are these firsts in human history, no other first can top the first human being resurrected from the dead, who is the first and only God/man who ever lived. Just imagine that you are the person designated to announce this greatest first to the world. Thus was the privilege of a man who denied the Lord before His execution. Our study this morning is to examine Peter's announcement to the world. Oh, we know that there were other announcements made to selected individuals and people.

Peter's announcement was to Israel and the world, **Acts 2:36 (ESV)** <sup>36</sup> **Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."**

*Read: Acts 2:22-28*

**Introduction:** It was now 50 days after that creation changing Passover, where the greater Isaac was sacrificed on God's altar as the fulfillment of the Paschal Lamb in the law of Moses. The Scapegoat had the sins of God's elect placed upon Him by the high priest, Jesus, who took on our debt to God and sacrificed himself outside the gate on a hill that resembled a skull.

Three days later, on the first day of the week, the first day of the new creation, Jesus was raised from the dead, another first, with a resurrection body. After appearing to many people alive **1 Corinthians 15:3-7 (ESV)** <sup>3</sup>

**For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.**

The disciples were instructed to remain in Jerusalem to wait for the ascended Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to empower the disciples to fulfill God's command in Acts 1:8. That moment has come. There was the sound of a mighty wind, and tongues of fire rested upon the disciples who were all gathered in one place, in the upper room. Now empowered, they began to obey. Taking advantage of the crowd that was present. Peter began to preach Christ crucified, risen, alive.

**Transition:** The crowd was bewildered because they heard them speaking in their languages. Their curiosity and the debate were stated this way, what is this all about? It was now up to Peter to explain things. He who denied the Lord was first to preach Christ crucified and risen. We see three elements of

his sermon. This sermon was perhaps the greatest ever preach and a guide for all who would come after Peter. The first thing Peter did was to describe:

**1. Jesus Attested: Acts 2:22 (ESV) <sup>22</sup> “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—**

As we notice Peter first addresses the question of attestation of Jesus as Israel’s Messiah. What evidence would Peter present to make his case? The case can only be made based on an acceptable witness that the crowd frankly was hard-pressed to believe. Peter answers that Jesus was attested by God. Peter used the many miracles of Jesus to press home his point.

We might ask ourselves which of the signs and miracles particularly pointed to Jesus as the Messiah? In John chapter 5, Jesus has just healed the man who was lame, residing at the pool called Bethesda. It was the Sabbath day. After the healing, the Jewish authorities sought to kill Jesus because He called God His father, **John 5:18 (ESV) <sup>18</sup> This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.**

They questioned His claim based on the lack of attestation. Jesus answered them this way, **John 5:31-32 (ESV) <sup>31</sup> If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true. <sup>32</sup> There is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true. Jesus is pointing to the testimony of the Father.**

How did the Father attest to Jesus's identity? He cited John’s witness, God’s voice of attestation at His baptism, and on the Mount of Transfiguration to the disciples, **Mark 9:7 (ESV) <sup>7</sup> And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, “This is my beloved Son; listen to him.”**

Jesus moved them to the Scriptures themselves, and the works that God gave Him to do, **John 5:36 (ESV)** <sup>36</sup> **But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. It is these works that Peter alludes to. Of course, the greater of the attestation is that God raised Jesus from the dead.**

I submit to any skeptic here today Jesus's statement concerning unbelief, **John 5:38 (ESV)** <sup>38</sup> **and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent.** This is amazing since the naysayers being referred to were all experts in the law of Moses. What is therefore their problem? It is a hardened heart before God. The word had no place in their hearts.

**Transition:** Peter now moves to the truth of something the Jews would find extremely hard to accept. That question is why would God allow the death of his appointed Messiah? Thus, Peter addresses:

**2. Jesus Slain: Acts 2:23 (ESV)** <sup>23</sup> **this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.**

Peter's revelation concerning the truth of Jesus. Execution no doubt stunned the assembled Jews and thus Gentiles scattered throughout. God used lawless evil man as the means to slay His own son. What? God killed the very Messiah that God promised Israel that He would send. The death of Christ as an atoning sacrifice was and is the linchpin of God's decree to set apart and make holy His own people, **Revelation 13:8 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup>, **and all who dwell on the earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.**

God's plan was not to deliver Israel politically from the tyranny of Rome but to deliver them from Satan, **1 John 3:8 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup> **Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the**

**beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.** How does a person know they are in bondage to the devil? **1 John 3:10 (ESV) <sup>10</sup> By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.**

To practice righteousness is to do God's will by obeying His commands from the heart, having had our hearts changed by regeneration through the Holy Spirit, by faith, through God's grace. That person who practices righteousness does their best as the frailty of our flesh allows while trusting that by grace through faith we are accepted by God as a matter of forensic truth that Christ paid our debt. And by that, we stand before God in Christ and his righteousness. The Holy Spirit removed our filthy rags and gave us an eternal gift, **2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV) <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

Peter places the cause of Jesus's death upon the eternal decree of the father while preaching that those present killed Jesus by proxy through lawless men.

**Transition:** At the climax of his sermon, Peter proclaims:

**3. Jesus Raised and Victorious: Acts 2:24-28 (ESV) <sup>24</sup> God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. <sup>25</sup> For David says concerning him, “I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; <sup>26</sup> therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. <sup>27</sup> For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. <sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’**

Peter now proclaims to the crowd that Jesus had to be raised from the dead as the fulfillment of a prophetic Psalm. That Psalm was a Psalm of David, Psalm 16:8 – 11. In this Psalm, Christ is speaking through David as He does

several times in the Psalms. Peter, discerning this, points to the Psalm to prove that the Messiah had to be raised because Jesus, the light of life, the one who embodies life, and death, had no permanent hold on Him. His death was as a substitute for us and our sins, and the resulting wrath of God. God has turned the tables on the devil. Death is the wages of sin. But since Christ was in Himself innocent, Satan had no hold on Him, **John 14:30 (ESV)** <sup>30</sup> **I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me...**

In this Psalm, Christ speaking, speaks constantly of His hope in the Lord, who P has constantly in His vision. The phrase, “he is at my right hand.” His Messiah’s confidence in the Lord’s presence at his right hand signifies that the Lord is His advocate. Even before His crucifixion and death, the Messiah is assured of God’s presence with Him.

Before time, the second person of the Trinity rejoiced at the loving faithfulness of the father. He is promised resurrection as His heart is filled with divine joy. These words offer another proof that the Father did not turn His face away from Christ on the cross. That teaching in addition to being common is poor interpretation.

In Psalm 22, the opening lines in which Jesus cries from the cross, state that the Father has not abandoned the Son, **Psalm 22:24 (ESV)** <sup>24</sup> **For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him.**

**Conclusion:** What a sermon! What a message! What a Savior! What a God! What a victory! What a hope!

The grave cannot hold boats to whom the Son grants eternal life. May we rejoice with Christ that our souls with him will not be abandoned to the grave. He is also made known to us, the way of life by God’s grace through faith in Christ crucified, risen, ascended, reigning, and coming again. Notice, this was not your typical altar call. There was no praying a prayer, no bowed heads only this conclusion, **Acts 2:36 (ESV)** <sup>36</sup> **Let all the house of Israel**

**therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”** The result of that sermon is that the people were cut to the heart and exclaimed, what shall we do? **Acts 2:38 (ESV)** <sup>38</sup> **And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

**And that is what you need to do if you have not received Christ.**